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 A  
LETTER  
TO  
Dr. TENNISON,  
Upon Occasion of a SERMON,  
ENTITLED,  
A SERMON Preach'd  
AT THE  
FUNERAL  
Of Her late MAJESTY  
Queen MARY,  
Of ever Blessed Memory.

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By *Thomas Ken*, D. D. late Bishop of *Bath and Wells*.

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S I R,

W H E N I heard of the Sickness of the late  
Illustrious Princess, whom I never fail'd  
to recommend to God, in my daily Pray-  
ers, and that your self was Her Con-  
fessor, I could not but hope, that at least on Her  
A Death-

Death-Bed, you would have dealt faithfully with Her.

But when I had read the SERMON, you preach'd at Her FUNERAL, I was heartily griev'd, to find myself disappointed, and God knows, how bitterly I bewail'd in Secret the manner of Her Death; and Reflecting again and again, on your Conduct of Her Soul, methought *a Spirit of slumber seem'd* to have possess'd you, otherwise it was impossible for one, who so well understood the Duty of a Spiritual Guide, as your self, who had *such happy Opportunities, and such signal Encouragements*, to Practise it in Her Case, should so grossly fail in *your Performance*, as either to over-look, or wilfully to omit that which all the World saw besides your self, and expected from you, and was of great Importance to Her Salvation.

You are a Person of Noted Abilities, and had a full *Knowledge of your Duty*, you had been many Years a Parish Priest, and exercised your Function with good repute, no one cou'd be better vers'd, *in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick* than your self, and the Sick Person was no Stranger to you, and you very well knew Her whole Story.

As you had *a full Knowledge of the Person, and of your Duty*, so you had *happy Opportunities* to have put *that Duty* in Practise.

You had free and frequent Accesses to Her, at your Pleasure; and *on Monday when the flattering Disease occasion'd some Hopes*, but especially *on the next Day, the Festival of Christ's Birth, when those Hopes were rais'd to a kind of Assurance*, p. 25. and continued so 'till Night, the peculiar Favour of Heaven, seem'd to have indulg'd you, all that inestimable Day; on purpose, that you might carefully employ it, in clearing Her Conscience with God, and Man, and in perfecting Her Preparations for Eternity; which had She recover'd,  
were

were as necessary, to render *Her Life* Holy, and Happy, as *Her Death*.

*Your Joy enduring but a Day, and that Day being clos'd with a dismal Night, you gave Her the Warning of her approaching Death, which you say She receiv'd, with a Courage agreeable to the strength of Her Faith, p. 26. You were set a Watch-man over Her, and if you did not give Her due Warning of Her Sin also, especially when you had so proper a time for doing it, and saw Her so capable of receiving it, God will require her Blood at your hands.*

You had this Advantage also, which is often wanting to sick Persons, that in the Visits you made Her you did not find Her Delirious, *and the Orders She gave for Prayers, p. 24. Her calling for Prayers a third time, when she fear'd she had slept the time before, the many most Christian things She said, p. 26. Her appointing Psalms, a Chapter concerning Trust in God, and a Sermon more than once, to be read by Her, p. 29. are signs She was not, at least that She was not so, in the Intervals wherein you officiated by Her.*

'Tis true she was often drowzy, but she was so very sensible of Her drowziness, that *she call'd for Prayers before the time, for fear that she should not be long compos'd, p. 28. and whenever you apply'd you self to Her, she was wakeful enough.*

You say indeed, *p. 27. That at the Receiving the Holy Eucharist, she found her self in a dozing Condition, but add, that she presently stir'd up her attention, and from thence forth to the end of the Office, had a perfect Command of her Understanding, and was intent upon the Great Work, she was going about: And methinks Sir, if you had been jealous over her Soul, with a godly Jealousy, when you gave Her the Viaticum, and saw that she had then a perfect Command of her Understanding,*  
and.

*and that she was intent*; you had another fit Season offer'd you by Heaven, to have minded her of any, but probable Defects in her Repentance, and to have exhorted her, to a short supplemental Confession.

Nay, to her very last, she seem'd not wholly incapable of any pious Intimations you might have given her, for her Understanding continued to that degree, That *nothing of Impertinence, scarce a number of disjointed Words were heard from her*; insomuch, that she said a devout AMEN, to that very Prayer, in which her pious Soul was recommended to that God who gave it, p. 49. So that your own Sermon will testify against you, that you had very happy Opportunities, of directing her Conscience; I must add, that you had as signal Encouragements also.

You had to deal with a Person, *whose Knowledge and Wisdom* you justly Commend, p. 3. and who might easily have been convinced, if in any one Instance, she had mistaken her Duty.

You had to deal with one, *whose Piety, Charity, and Humility*, you in many respects deservedly Magnify, p. 10. I only wish you had added *her Justice* also, to have made her Character compleat; However, those three Virtues were powerful Inducements, to have us'd a Conscientious freedom with her.

You had, as appears by the Character you give her, a *Pious, Charitable, Humble Soul*, under your Care, a Subject most happily dispos'd to work on, who had always been very *Reverent and Attentive at Sermons*, p. 9. *who had an Averseness to Flattery*, p. 12. and who would thankfully have received, *any Pious, or Charitable, or humble Admonition*, you had given her.

I now beseech you, Sir, to spend a few thoughtful Minutes, in comparing your Performance, as you your self represent it, in your own Sermon, with your  
Know-

Knowledge, with the Opportunities, and Encouragements you had, and with the Rubrick of the Church.

You mention a very Religious Saying which fell from her, *That she had learn'd from her Youth a true Doctrine, That Repentance was not to be put off to a Death-bed*, p. 26. But it was your Duty, considering the Deceitfulness of all Hearts, and the usual Infirmities, and Forgetfulness, and Indisposedness of Sick Persons, to have supplied all her Oversight, and Omission, and to have examin'd the Truth of her Repentance, *whether she truly Repented of her Sins*, and where you knew any thing of Moment, which had escap'd her Observation, you ought to have been her Remembrancer.

I therefore challenge you to answer before God and the World, Did you know of no weighty Matter which ought to have troubled this Princesses Conscience, tho' at present she seem'd not to have felt it, and for which, you ought to have mov'd her to a special Confession, in order to Absolution?

Were you satisfied, *that she was in Charity with all the World?* Did you know of no Enmity between her and her Father, of no Variance between her and her Sister?

Did you know of no Person who ever offended her, *whom she was to forgive?* Did you know of no one Person whom she had offended, *and of whom she was to ask Forgiveness?* Did you know of no one Injury or Wrong she had done to any Man, *to whom she was to make Amends, to the uttermost of her Power?*

Was the whole Revolution manag'd with that Purity of Intention, that perfect Innocence, that exact Justice, that tender Charity, and that unreproachable Veracity, that there was nothing amiss in it; no remarkable Failings, nothing that might deserve one penitent Reflection?

B

You

( 6 )  
You cannot, you dare not say it; and if you should, out of your own Mouth I can condemn you; for you your self in your serious Intervals, have pass'd as severe a Censure on the *Revolution*, as any of those they call *Jacobites* could do; you have said, more than once, *That it was all an Unrighteous thing*; Why did you not then deal sincerely with this dying Princess, and tell her so, when you must needs be sensible, that in steering her Conscience wrong, you ship-wreck'd your own.

If then, Sir, you consider, *the happy Opportunities* you have lost, *the signal Encouragements* you have neglected, and the *tremendous Hazard* to which you have expos'd the precious Soul, of this Illustrious Princess by your Unfaithfulness; If you lay to Heart how much you have acted against your own Knowledge and Convictions, what ill Example you have given to the Clergy, what Scandal to all good Men, what Wounds to our most Holy Religion, and what Occasions to the Enemy to Blaspheme, what have you to do, but to testify your Repentance, before God and the World, and to mourn in Sackcloth and Ashes, all the Remainder of your days?

What was it, Sir, that mov'd you to act thus notoriously against your own Conscience? Was it the fear you had, of losing the Favour of the Court, which made you rather venture the Indignation of Heaven, even that fear was vain, for it had been no Offence against the Government, to have perswaded a dying *Daughter* to have bestowed one Compassionate Prayer on her afflicted *Father*, had he been never so unnatural, tho' the Case was here quite contrary, for he was one of the tenderest *Fathers* in the World.

Besides, her Illustrious Consort, who manifested so very great and worthy a Passion for her, would, I dare say,

say, have had nothing omitted, which might have been thought conducive, to her Eternal Happiness; and a Conscientious Faithful Confessor, especially on the Death-bed, is *one of a thousand*, who will always be desired and valued, and rever'd. Believe me Sir, you have given the World reason to conclude, that your own Conscience misgave you, being sensible, that *in reproving her*, you must have *reproach'd your self*.

You say, *She was so judicious and devout a Saint, the degenerate Church of Rome can by no means shew us*, p. 9. but surely it had been Prudence in you, to have wav'd that Comparison, for should you chance hereafter, to blame that Church for Canonizing *Thomas a Becket*, for which she really is blame-worthy, 'tis obvious for her, to make this appropriate Reply to you, that 'tis as justifiable in her *to Saint such a Subject*, as for you, *to Saint such a Daughter*.

You tell us *she was one whom I am well assured had all the Duty in the World, for other Relations, which after long, and laborious Consideration, she judg'd consistent, with her Obligations to God, and to her Country*, p. 15.

The Consideration then which she used, to reconcile her Judgment to the Revolution, was it seems, *Long and Laborious*, notwithstanding the assistance of her new Casuists, it being no easy matter, to overcome the contrary Remonstrances of Nature, and of her own Conscience, and to unlearn those Evangelical *Maxims*, which were carefully taught her, by the faithful Guides of her Youth, others might begin to instil opposite Principles into her, others might confirm her, but the finishing Strokes were reserved for you.

But what do you mean, Sir, by *other Relations*, we may guess that you mean *her Royal Father, Mother-in-Law, and Brother*, but you are at liberty to say, you mean

mean any *other Relations* if you please, you give us ambiguous and general Words only, when you should have given us, most exprefs and particular.

*All the Duty in the World* is a comprehensive term, but wherein, Sir, did any *part of all that Duty* appear? Why are you not so just to her, and to your self, as to give us some of those Compassionate, and melting Expressions of Filial Duty, which flow'd from her on that Subject? Why do you not produce some Instances of *her Mildness and Mercifulness to her Enemies*, p. 16. and whom you knew she treated as such, tho' their Crime was their being her Father's Friends, they would have been much for her Honour; would have given great Satisfaction to all good People, would have convinc'd the World, that *the manner of her Death* had been in all respects truly *Christian*, p. 23. would have been much for your own Reputation, and much for the Credit of the *Revolution* in which you are as great a *Zea-*  
*lot*, as a *Gainer*.

If you were so well assur'd of *all that Duty*, what dreadful Negligence were you guilty of, in not putting her in mind of it on her Death-bed? Methinks, Sir, you are not just to her, when you give us Instances of *her Charity*, to several sorts of indigent People, and to Strangers, *which all the World knew*, and give us no Instances of *even her natural Affection*, to her own Royal Father, of *which all the World doubted*; when had you suggested that Duty to her, as you ought to have done, she would have shew'd her self a tenderhearted *Daughter*, and would have been extremely afflicted, for having been instrumental to her Father's Calamity.

It is far from my Intentions here to dispute the *Lawfulness of the Revolution*, yet I may say that I never met with any so Bigotted to it, who would undertake to justify all the part, which she as a *Daughter* had in it,  
and

and I am perswaded that it would mightily puzzle you, to tell us in particular, *what those Obligations were, which she had to God, and to her Country, which were inconsistent with her Filial Duty.*

You complain, p. 17. *Great is our Loss of a most Pious Queen, in an Atheistical, and Prophane Age, in which the Seeds of Impiety, which have been sowing for some Years, have sprung up in greater plenty than ever;* but Sir, did not your Heart smite you, when you uttered this Complaint; for I would fain know whether any thing has more contributed, to render the *Age Atheistical and Prophane*, or more promoted that fatal *Plenty*, than the Prevarications of your self, and your Time-serving Brethren.

You take notice more than once, of the shortening the Life of this Illustrious Princess, that she was *taken away in the midst of her days*, p. 18. *at Thirty Three Years Old*, p. 32. *in the Flower of her Age*, p. 33. but you take no notice of that which most probably occasioned it, for the Fifth Commandment is not to be evaded, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, (which is the first Commandment with Promise).* that it may be well with Thee, and thou mayest live long on the Earth, and if any, even Princes, for the Command makes no exception, do visibly *Dis honour Father and Mother, and their Lives are cut short*, the very Command of God assigns the Cause of it, and I hope the surviving Princess will consider, and take Warning, and Repent, lest God be provoked, *to cut her Life as short as her Sisters.*

You say, p. 30. *That having like David serv'd her own Generation, by the Will of God she fell asleep;* and if you had been a true *Nathan* to her, the Similitude had been very proper, but her Virtue having like *David's*, suffer'd an Eclipse, you took no care that it should break out again, in as conspicuous a Repentance.

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You

( 10 )  
You mention *the strong Hopes you have of her everlasting Felicity*, p. 32. but as you managed her Conscience, you should rather have call'd them, *strong Presumptions*, *I have Hopes of her everlasting Felicity as well as you*, tho' not at all grounded on your Guidance, but on the Infinite Mercy of God, who makes inmost gracious abatement, for all our Infirmities, and for all the degrees of excusability we can plead, and when I consider her conjugal Love and Awe, the horrid Misrepresentations made to her, of her Royal Father, the various, and studied Trains laid to delude her, the plausible pretences of Religion, of Scripture, and of the Glory of God, which she heard daily inculcated, and the unfaithfulness of her Guides who had wholly possessed her Ear, together with her subdued Will, her soft and tender Sex, and Temper, her well-meant tho' misguided Zeal, the Piety of her Inclinations, and her ardent Desire, that *her Soul might be without spot presented to God*, which she manifested, *in ordering that Collect to be read twice every day*, p. 24. I have Hopes, that God accepted of her general Repentance, and by a super-effluence of Grace supply'd the Defects of it.

What therefore I have said, is not in the least to derogate, from any of her Virtues, but to Expostulate with you, for being the occasion, that they did not shine out in their full Lustre; and whether such *Shepherds* may not be said, *to feed themselves rather than the Flock*, whether your Behaviour to this dying Princess, does not reach those Expressions of the Prophet, *Of crying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, and of daubing with untemper'd Mortar*, whether it is not *healing a Spiritual Hurt slightly*; let all my Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, who are untainted with the *Latitudinarian Leven*, whether they are *Possessed* of their Benefices, or *Depriv'd*, be the Judges.

Before

( 11 )  
Before I take my leave, I cannot but remark that spiteful Reflection, you bestow on the poor Sufferers, which you thus express, *And Domestick Discontent reigning in those, whose Resentments are stronger than their Reason.* p. 18.

The Persons whom you thus Characterise will tell you, that 'tis much easier, for you, to *revile their Reasons*, than to *Answer them*, of which you are so very sensible, that no one labours more industriously than your self, to debar them the Liberty of the Press.

As for their *Resentments*, the greatest they have at present, are against your self, not for your Promotion, which I know none of them that envy, but for your misguidance of that Illustrious Princefs, whose everlasting Happiness they prayed for, and whose untimely Death they deplore.

In the mean time, Sir, none of that Dirt, which you cast at the *faithful Remnant* will stick, but will recoil on your self, and I have Reason to believe, that *that Great Prince*, whom such as you, had rather *flatter* than *imitate*, does esteem them at least Honest Men, and indeed in their being tender of *their former Oaths*, they have followed that *Illustrious Example*, which he himself set them; for there was a time, when he being Prince of *Orange*, had the Sovereignty of the *Seven Provinces* offered him, and offered him by a Power, which would have put him into Possession, and he rejected that tempting offer, with a most Heroick and Christian Answer, to this purpose, *That he had lately taken an Oath to be true to his Country, which he would by no means violate.*

It was *Wisdom*, not that which is Earthly, but that which is from *above*, which taught the Prince of *Orange*, to prefer a good Conscience before a Kingdom, a Blissful and an *Eternal Crown*, before one that was *Vexatious*  
and

( 12 )  
*and Transitory*; and may the same *Divine Wisdom* in his present Circumstances, vouchsafe to be his Counsellor; If then, he when a Prince was so *Conscientious* in observing his Oath to the States, can he have an ill Opinion of Priests, and of Bishops, who *are alike Conscientious* in observing their Oaths? 'Tis improbable he should, unless he has such *Confessors* as your self, to exasperate him against them; but from such *Confessors*, I beseech God to deliver him.

God of his Great Mercy grant, that what I have written, may awaken you out of your Slumber, and conduce to your Repentance, the only Preservative against all those *Woes*, which are denounced against careless *Shepherds*.

March the 29th  
1695.

Your faithful Friend in  
our Common Saviour.



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